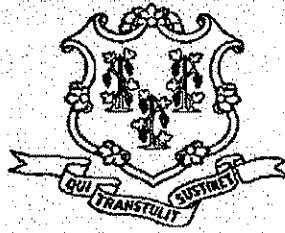


REPRESENTATIVE JOHN E. PISCOPO
SEVENTY-SIXTH DISTRICT

50 JUDSON STREET
THOMASTON, CONNECTICUT 06787
TELEPHONES
HOME: (860) 283-2155

CAPITOL: (860) 240-8700
IN STATE TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-1423



MINORITY WHIP

FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING
COMMITTEE
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE
NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
06106-1591

March 16, 2006

Testimony from:

Hon. John E. Piscopo, 76th Assembly District

To: Members of the Committee on Labor and Public Employees

Re: House Bill 5741, An Act Concerning The Prevailing Wage Thresholds

**SENATOR PRAGUE, SENATOR GOMES, SENATOR GUGLIELMO,
REPRESENTATIVE RYAN, REPRESENTATIVE ZALASKI, REPRESENTATIVE
HETHERINGTON; MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC
EMPLOYEES:**

**I COME BEFORE YOU TODAY TO AFFIRM MY SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL
5741, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PREVAILING WAGE THRESHOLDS.**

**UNDER CURRENT LAW, WORKERS EMPLOYED ON STATE AND LOCAL
GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS COSTING MORE THAN \$400,000
OR ON STATE AND LOCAL ALTERATION AND REPAIR JOBS COSTING MORE
THAN \$100,000 MUST BE PAID AT A RATE EQUAL TO THE RATE
PREVAILING FOR THE SAME WORK IN THE SAME TRADE OR OCCUPATION
IN THE TOWN IN WHICH THE PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT IS BEING
CONSTRUCTED, WHICH USUALLY TRANSLATES TO UNION SCALE WAGES.**

**IF THIS BILL BECOMES LAW, IT WOULD INCREASE THE PREVAILING WAGE
THRESHOLDS FOR PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS SO PREVAILING WAGES
WOULD NOT HAVE TO BE PAID ON STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS COSTING LESS THAN ONE MILLION DOLLARS
FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND LESS THAN FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND
DOLLARS FOR RENOVATION WORK.**

CONNECTICUT HAS AN EXTREMELY LOW PREVAILING WAGE THRESHOLD FOR PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS - AND IT HAS NOT BEEN CHANGED FOR MORE THAN A DECADE.

DURING THAT TIME, INFLATION AND THE COST OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS HAVE COMBINED TO DRIVE UP THE COST OF PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS.

AT TODAY'S PRICES, IT IS UNREASONABLE AND UNFAIR TO KEEP PREVAILING WAGE LIMITS AT PRESENT LEVELS. IF THIS MEASURE IS ENACTED, IT WILL ALLOW MORE SMALL CONTRACTORS TO COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY FOR PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS.

THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND OTHER PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS THAT COST MORE THAN ONE MILLION DOLLARS AS WELL AS RENOVATION PROJECTS THAT TOTAL MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS.

WHEN THE HIGHER COSTS REQUIRED BY THE PREVAILING WAGE LAW ARE FACTORED INTO THE COST OF A PROJECT, THEY BECOME FAR MORE EXPENSIVE FOR CONNECTICUT'S TOWNS AND CITIES - ESPECIALLY DURING ECONOMIC DOWNTURNS.

MOST POLLS SHOW THAT JOBS AND THE ECONOMY ARE THE ISSUES OF GREATEST CONCERN FOR CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS THIS YEAR.

RAISING THE PREVAILING WAGE THRESHOLDS TO ONE MILLION DOLLARS AND FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS WOULD ENCOURAGE CONNECTICUT MUNICIPALITIES TO PROCEED WITH LONG OVERDUE PROJECTS THAT HAVE BEEN POSTPONED BECAUSE OF THEIR HIGH COST.

I URGE THE LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE TO ACT FAVORABLY ON THIS BILL.

IT WILL ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROVIDE NEW JOBS FOR CONNECTICUT'S UNDER-EMPLOYED CONSTRUCTION WORKERS.

THANK YOU.